A LETTER written by Monsieur de Chamillard Secretary of State to the French King, to the Duke of Berwick Marshal of France and Capt. Gen. of the French forces in Castile, which was intercepted Dec. 10. 1706.

Translated from the Copy printed at Saragossa, *By Authority.*

My LORD,

HAving laid before the King your Excellency's Letter, of the 11th of *November*, His Majesty commands me to let you know how well satisfied he is with your Excellency's continued good Conduct, which he will always keep fresh in his Memory; and to return the following Answer to the several Particulars you mention: First, The greater Streights and Difficulties Things are brought to, the more ought to be your Excellency's Vigilance. For the ill Success of our Armies in Flanders and Italy hath obliged His Majesty to make Overtures of Peace not very agreeable to the Honour and Interest of France: But the Obstinacy of the Blinded Allies of the House of Austria makes them tenacious, and will not listen to any thing but the entire Restitution of the Pretended Rights of that House; and they lay hold of this Opportunity to revenge themselves of that they call Injuries done them, the Prosperity of this Crown, and to lessen its Power; endeavouring to hinder our continued Successes, which they look upon as so many Chains prepared for the Liberties of Europe; and thus become regardless of the Reasonableness of the Terms offer'd. What Prejudice would it have been to France, to have [illegible] Spain, and held the Balance? But the Error committed in accepting the Crown of Spain, contrary to the Partition-Treaty, by Means of which we had been the Arbitrators of Europe in Peace and War, hath given the Enemy another Opportunity. And now Experience sheweth, that His Majesty finds it impossible to stop the Rapidity of this Current; for nothing will content them less than the total Ruine of France. And altho' it hath been represented to them from the King, What if the House of Austria should again arrive to its former Greatness, which threatned the Liberties of Europe, and which those Powers themselves were so Heroick to suppress, yet do now with so much Blindness help to elevate; not considering, if France be brought low, who shall hold the Balance. To which they reply, That they shall be always ready to join with the Weakest, and bend their Forces against the [illegible], and so put the Power into such a Balance as they [illegible] maintain the [illegible] Liberty of Europe: which therefore will not admit of any [illegible] of France and Spain by continuing the War, or that Spain be given up by a Treaty of Peace.

In the Battle of Flanders was lost a most flourishing Army and a plentiful Country full of People, which, with the great Contributions there, facilitated our Recruits: And what we have lost in this Particular the Enemies have gained, and have thereby rendred themselves capable of continuing the War with less Charge to their Subjects, or at least to augment the Number of their Troops under the Colours of a new Master; which will oblige France to greater Expences, and to increase its Armies, to defend it self; altho' almost impossible, without totally depopulating the Country. And after all we can expect no other than an unhappy War; our old Troops being wasted, and our Armies now compiled of raised Levies; and as their Numbers increase, so will our Power lessen, besides these cannot come in Competition with Veteran Troops flush'd with the Glory of Conquest.

The Theatre of the War on that side will be in Picardy; which Province will be so embroiled, that it will not be able to help any thing towards the immense Charges of the Crown, which every Day grow greater, and the Means less, for want of Cultivating the Ground, Manufactures, and Trade; Men being obliged to leave their Houses, and serve in the War.

The Consequences of the Battle in Italy are not less considerable: For there we have lost an Army, Garisons, and Magazines; and it will be very difficult to recruit and pay an Army there; the Enemy having gained the flourishing State of Milan, and with it very large Contributions, with which their Army will be punctually paid; whereas before it cost the Emperor much Care and Application to subsist it: And the next Campaign they may carry the War into Dauphine, which will render that Province (as well as Picardy) incapable of contributing towards our immense Charges: And it is very natural to believe that the Flames now covered with Ashes in the Cevennes will burst out anew. These Considerations make it appear too plainly that the Supporting of Spain may be the Ruine of France; and, to prevent this, the King hath resolved to hearken to the hard and insufferable Terms of Peace, submitting to the Times, and hoping a better Conjuncture may offer hereafter for the renewing his Pretensions.

Whilst His Majesty's Ministers are in Treaty it will be necessary to quit Spain, and that your Excellency use all Politick Artifices upon this Occasion; so that the Country may remain ruined, and not be in a Condition for many Years to think of any thing more than to repair its own Losses, and be incapable of defending it self alone: To which End your Excellency must concert and be assisting with those that depend on France, so as that all the several Orders which compose the Politick Body of that Monarchy may be brought into Disorder, and to spend their Time in new modelling their Affairs.

Your Excellency will be pleased to temporize with the Heads of the Religious Orders, feeding them with Hopes of Preferment to Ecclesiastical Dignities; so that they, buoy'd up with these Thoughts, may urge from the Pulpit and Confessionaries that this is a War of Religion; and thus frighten inconsiderate People, whose Religious Dispositions will enclin them to think it a lesser Evil to abandon their Houses, Estates and the Care of their Families, out of their Zeal for Religion. And that these Ecclesiastical Ministers may apply themselves with the greater Efficacy, they must be engaged by secret Gifts and the Hopes of the highest Dignities in their several Orders, and of other Preferments to such as are qualified: For by Experience we find that Apocryfal Papers strengthen our Title and our Interest, by publishing our good Successes, and the Extortions of the Allies in the Countries which they conquer. Your Excellency must order the Continuance of this Zeal; for that some out of their Affection, others to shew their Parts, some to make an Interest at Court, some for other Ends, will be engaged to publish such Papers as your Excellency shall command. And such Bishops as your Excellency knows to be engaged by Affection, or otherwise in our Interest, must not be left discouraged, but live in Hopes of being made Cardinals; and therefore they and their Dependents must vehemently press the Specious Pretence of Religion, which is so mixed with the Interest of State; and these must use the same Methods as the Prelates of the several Religious Orders, with all the inferior Ecclesiasticks depending on them. This will affect the Ignorant Nobility and Blind People, who are much the greater Number, and compose the Strength of the Kingdom which must be ruined.

The President of Castile must instruct all the Magistracy, in their several Stations and Countries, in the aforegoing Maxims, gaining the Gentlemen of the best Quality with Promises, (which must never be wanting.) And, to make a shew of Reality, the President of Castile must be careful to employ some of them, which will make many more live in Expectation of being also employed: For the preferring of some at present will give greater Life to the Hopes of the rest. But where you find any who by the Clearness of their Judgment, or their Experience in Business, shall discern any thing of this Management, and talk of it, the Magistrates must imprison them, seize their Papers, and confiscate their Estates; taking Occasion to discourse of the Reason of their Imprisonment, and that it is very just, even though their nearest Relations and best Friends should solicite their Liberty; and it must be alledged there were already such Proofs as amounted to a Conviction before the Prisoner was apprehended. If any Person of a considerable Estate shall be seized for the aboveſaid Reasons, he must be sent to France, where he shall not be denied Necessaries. This Method must be vigorously pursued; for the Truth introduces it self, as the Light, in every Crevice, and the Discourses of some may awaken others. The King's Affairs require more Obedience than Discretion; besides, the imprisoning of some will be a Terror to others: The Confiscation of their Estates will help much towards the great Expences in which France is engaged on every side. Your Excellency must send to this Kingdom all the Effects you can possibly, upon different Pretences, some to recruit Troops, others to buy Cloaths for Soldiers; undervaluing those made in Spain, as well in regard to their Quality as their Price. The Militia is another considerable Part of the State, and now more than ever, and therefore must be paid as punctually as the Soldiers, which will engage them not to desert; and they should be treated as Men of the same Nation and Religion, and allowed all kind of Liberty, as well in their Winter-Quarters, and in those Places of Countries which adhere to the King, as in those which have declared for the Enemy when they shall take them. The Officers must be cherished, and paid as far as is possible, that they may be contented: But as it is not Interest alone for which they serve, but Honour, and the Hopes of greater Posts and Preferments; there must for this Reason be made, out of those who are well affected, a good Number of Brigadiers, Major-Generals, Lieutenant-Generals, and Officers of other Degrees: For that others seeing these run, or rather fly, into Preferments, will hope to be as Happy. And tho' the Promotion of so many Officers will render it impossible to find a sufficient Fund in the whole World to pay them punctually, this will be remedied by permitting them to get what they can in their Quarters and otherwise for their Subsistance: For this Proud Nation will be better satisfied with the Honour of their Imployments than with Money; besides, the Sobriety with which they are used, will not make them think the worse of such a Multitude of Officers. The Consequence will be, That when Spain must be left, there will remain so great a Number of Officers of all Ranks, that it will be impossible to imploy them all; and when a regular Government reforms or disbands them, there will be so many Complainants as there shall be Persons dispossessed of what they thought their just Right: And this will occasion a great many to remain firm to the King's Interest, in whom His Majesty may always confide. Such other Artifices as may be proper are also to be used towards these Persons who shall be removed from their Imployments.

Another Part of the State is Trade and Commerce, by means of which Riches are brought to a Kingdom; and this is already sufficiently ruined by the continual Navigation of our Ships from the Ports of France with Manufactures from the first Hand, at low Rates, and underselling the Spaniards in the West-Indies, who cannot sell so cheap without losing Part of their Principal; besides, the Viceroys and Governors connive at and tolerate our Merchants, to please the Court; and this in many Things which they don't allow in those of their own Nation. The Privileges commanded to be given the French Merchants, in buying of Wools in Castile, facilitates their being sent to this Kingdom preferably to any other Country; and then the Spaniards find a great Conveniency in the Cheapness of our Manufactures.

And for a Conclusion of all, Monsieur du Casse hath Orders to bring the Spanish Flota to the Ports of France, where Reprisals will be made of all the Cargoes under a Pretence of Satisfaction for the immense Charge this Crown hath been at to defend Spain.

It's necessary that your Excellency give strict Orders to the Commissaries in the several Parts of Spain to purchase all the Wrought Plate, Gold and Jewels, they can, altho' at something more than their real Value; which will be saved by the low Value of the Specie in which they shall be paid for: And for this Purpose Orders are given that our Coin shall be current in all Castile, whither will be sent what shall be new coined of a low Allay. These are the Measures taken to accomplish the Ruine of Spain, by putting the Spaniards upon quarreling among themselves; and when they shall come to be undeceived, it will be no Matter if the ancient Antipathy and Hatred of the two Nations be renew'd. Those who shall govern for the future must act as the Times will permit. In the mean time Spain will remain ruined, the Nobility and People dejected and brought low, and all the Degrees of that Monarchy confounded; particularly the Militia, by means of this infinite Number of new and unworthy Officers of all Ranks; the Commerce destroy'd, and the Seed of Discord sowed among those who sided with either Party; as hath been seen on the like Occasions, not only in this Kingdom, but in Naples, Castile, and Portugal.

Thus shall we draw the Substance out of Spain, (since we are disappointed of making it a Province to France, and one of its Dependancies, with a Viceroy; only with a higher Title) and we shall reduce the Spaniards to so low a Condition that they shall not be able to help themselves, nor obstruct our Designs in other Parts of Europe. This is what the King commands me to signifie to your Excellency. I am always,

My LORD,

Your Most Affectionate Humble Servant.

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CHARLES (*by the Grace of God*) *King of* Castillia, *of* Leon, *of* Arragon, *of the Two* Sicilies, *of* Jerusalem, *of* Navarre, *of* Granada, *of* Toledo, *of* Valencia, *of* Galicia, *of* Majorca, *of* Sevil, *of* Sardinia, *of* Cordova, *of* Corsica, *of* Murcia, *of* Jaen, *of the* Algarves, *of* Algezira, *of* Gibraltar, *of the* Canary Islands, *of the* East *and* West-Indies, Islands *and* Terra-firma, *of the* Ocean-Sea; *Arch-Duke of* Austria; *Duke of* Burgundy, *of* Brabant *and* Milan; *Earl of* Augspurg, *of* Flanders, Tirol *and* Barcelona; *Lord of* Biscay, *and of* Molina, *&c.*

IT is very notorious to all Europe, with what Stedfastness the most August Emperor, my Lord and Father, (of Glorious Memory) maintained to the last his Resolution, not to suffer the separating from the Crown of Spain any of the Jewels of which it is composed, at the Expence of the Blood of so many valiant Spaniards. This same constant Maxim hath been pursued by the Invincible Lord, the Emperor my Brother, with the Vigour which the happy Successes of his Arms have manifested; in which I have concurred on my part, omitting neither Fatigues, nor Diligence, whereby I might contribute to so Glorious and important an End, exposing my self to the greatest Dangers; which being so well known, I shall not mention here. Every unbiassed and prudent Judge will plainly see, that although this Enterprize be indeed advantagious to the Interests of our most August House, no less Benefit will accrue hereby to the whole Monarchy of Spain in general, and every one of it's Subjects in particular, whom we the Austrian Kings have always look'd upon more like our Children than Subjects, without making any partial Distinction of one from the other. On the contrary, the chief Aim of the French in their Negotiations (though cloth'd with different Colours) has been to extirpate the Spaniards, and to bury in Oblivion the Memory of their Glorious Actions. France hath never ceased to endeavour with the utmost Care the adjusting a Peace by dividing this Monarchy, and at this time doth solicite it with more Earnestness than ever; for on the repeated ill Successes which she hath had, and the late Overthrows in the Netherlands and Piedmont, by which she lost Flanders and the State of Milan, she fears that if it be not obtained before the Opening of the next Campaign, the War will then be carried into her own Country, together with those unavoidable Calamities under which Divine Justice hath brought her Ambition. But our Allies with great Constancy have always rejected these Proposals, truly knowing the Poison that was hid in them, expecting the good Success and Security of the Peace from nothing but the happy Progresses of the War, and hoping that God will continue his Assistance, as we have experienced his Divine Aid in such remarkable Victories obtained by their Glorious Arms, and that I may be put in Possession of the Monarchy, and France obliged by Force to a due Observance of the Treaties which shall be made, since Experience has taught that the Faith of Oaths is not sufficient to bind her. At the same time the Subtility of the French perceiving they cannot destroy this Monarchy by the Means of a Partition (which is not hearken'd unto) endeavours to reduce it as low as they can, by maintaining the War in Spain; so that this Kingdom, having lost its Strength and Power, may not (as formerly) obstruct their Great Designs; for on this firm Rock it is that the Waves have always been broken, with which their Ambition has endeavoured to drown the Liberties of Europe. To this End, how many false Suggestions and deceitful Reports have they spread abroad, as well of my being dead, as concerning Religion, which no Body can be ignorant of; by these Scandalous Methods perverting the unwary Spaniards, and making them Instruments of the unhappy Ruine of their Country. But still they are in time to prevent so fatal a Blow to their own Honour and Interest, and not to suffer History to be stained with so foul a Blot, to the Disgrace of themselves and their Posterity. It is therefore most just, that whilst the French are endeavouring to tear this Monarchy in Pieces by their Foreign Negotiations, and by keeping up the Rage of War in the Heart of it, the Spaniards appear in its Defence; and, as not only Reasons of Policy, but even Natural Instinct, directs them that they unite firmly together, whereby they will be enabled to shake off the heavy Yoak of the French, and to drive out of Spain these ancient and implacable Rivals of their Glory.

The Motion of the French Troops to Winter in Castile, in a Season so far advanced, leaving their convenient Quarters, is a plain Indication of their ill Designs: For upon any Event their Intention is to retire to France with the remaining Treasure of Spain, colouring their Marches with plausible Pretences; so that when the Spaniards shall discover their ignominious Treatment by these Proceedings, there will be no time left for their Relief.

This Danger being so great, it is not easie to believe that there should be a Spaniard who will not join his Endeavours in this Juncture to disperse such deceitful Guests, and to make them pay exemplarily for their Villany in deceiving those that trusted in them, and delivered themselves into their Hands. It ought not to be forgotten what France practised with those of Messina; abandoning of them entirely, and leaving them to beg for Protection in most of the Courts of Europe: The same she will do by the Spaniards, if they do not open their Eyes in time to avoid it; nor will their fortune be better than that of those unhappy People, for they ought not to expect that those who have endeavoured their Ruine in Spain, will afterwards treat them well in France: It being a great Error to forsake the Endearments of a Natural Mother, for the rough Treatment of a severe Step-Mother; for Nature will not change. It is unnecessary to remind the Spaniards of the Violencies they have experienced from the Government of the French in this unhappy Time of the Duke of Anjou's Usurpation, since they are so visible, as well as the vain Chimera's the Enemy make use of to deceive them.

Every one must plainly see how the French would hide their corrupt Designs with the Veil of Religion. For at the same time that they were procuring the Extirpation of the Catholick Religion in Hungary and Tranlilvania, and placing in those Dominions Protestant Princes, Exciting and Aiding those Rebels in a War (which no body can deny) was grounded on the pure Motive of Religion; who shall be so easy as to believe that Religion is their Motive in Spain, where their Pretences are so different? And that at the same time they were carrying on the Negotiations at Constantinople to stir up the Arms of the Turks against the Empire, yet there was found more Truth in those Infidels than in the French, who have not been able with all their Perswasions to procure a Breach, nor the violating the Oath made for the Security of the last Treaty. So few Years have past, that our Christian Zeal cannot forget the happy Successes that attended the glorious Arms of the Emperor, my Lord and Father, (of blessed Memory) penetrating into the Ottoman Dominions; so that there was good Grounds to hope we should have seen the most glorious Standard of the Cross displayed on the Walls of Constantinople; there having been no such favourable Juncture to Christendom since the Foundation of the Ottoman Power, as then occured, for the reducing it to the lowest Ebb, had not France so abruptly begun a War with his Imperial Majesty upon Pretentions of the Dutchess of Orleans, not being able to frame any of his own, even with the help of his usual Equivocations. This Fact is so notorious, that no body (though very remote from Publick Affairs) but must have heard it lamented, as a Misfortune to Christendom, abhorring the Proceedings of the French in a Case in which the Extention of our Holy Catholick Faith was so deeply concerned; and comparing the Circumstances of such notorious Facts, (without calling to mind many others more ancient and often repeated) it appears plainly who it is that studies and endeavours the Encrease of Religion, and who hath most earnestly endeavour'd its Prejudice. Although the Reports that have been dispersed in Castile, in Gazettes and Manifestoes, That I had given Publick Churches to the English and Dutch for the Exercise of their Religion, are unworthy of my Observation; yet this being a Point that so much wounds the Zeal of a Catholick Prince (for which I ought so highly to value my self as Son of that most August House, which hath been an Example to the World in the maintaining at all times the Purity of the Catholick Religion) I am obliged to declare the Falsity of these Suggestions: For that in Catalonia, Arragon, and Valentia, ever since my Arrival, the Divine Worship hath been observed with the same Reverence as was always practised in these Religious Countries; the Troops of my Allies observing so exact an Order and Military Discipline that there never hath been any manner of Complaint of the least Irreverence towards the Churches, or what is Sacred: And placing at the Feet of Jesus Christ the Falsities which have been dispersed on this Subject, I protest, That if I thought there would happen through my means the least Detriment to our most Holy Catholick Religion, to avoid it, I would not only renounce the Dominion of the Crown of Spain, but of the whole Universe; valuing more the happy Name of a Faithful and Beloved Son of the Church, than all the Crowns of the World.

My Allies in this War neither have had nor have any other End, than to support with their Arms my Just and Clear Right to the Monarchy of Spain; and that France, with her Ambitious Designs, should not oppress the Liberties of Europe. This is their true Interest and Maxim; in which it appears to me, they proceed with so much Purity and Faithfulness, that as soon as ever it shall happen a Peace is concluded, they will immediately withdraw all their Troops out of Spain.

These plain Demonstrations I have thought fit to represent to the Spaniards, moved to it by the great Love I have for them, that they may awaken out of the unhappy Lethargy in which they have hitherto liv'd; and if they do it without delay, they will find in me the grateful Reception which all my Subjects who have and do come over to me, have experienced; as the Spanish Officers, Civil and Military, who were in Flanders when those States were reduced to my Obedience and under my Dominion (I having commanded they should be maintained in the same Posts and Employments which at that time they enjoyed;) as also many Officers, who, repenting them of their Error in Serving the Duke of Anjou, have returned to their Duty in my Troops, have not only found among them the Degrees and Command they had with the Enemy, but greater Advancements; which is notorious to all.

Every one may judge what a powerful Army I shall draw together on Arrival of the Troops which I suddenly expect on board the Fleet of my Allies; and if I meet with Opposition in my March to my Court of Madrid, I shall be obliged to lead them thither: From whence will result to the Kingdom of Castile that inevitable Ruin that attends the Fate of the War, which my Compassion towards them inclines me to avoid; and this can be done by no other Means, than that the Spaniards, uniting to so glorious a Purpose, should break the infamous Chain of their Liberties, expelling out of Spain our common Enemy the French. And the Fleets of England and Holland passing up into Italy to support my good and faithful Subjects, whom the French Tyranny doth oppress in the Kingdoms of Naples and Sicily, we shall not only obtain a sudden Recovery of the whole Body of the Monarchy, but transfer the Theater of War into France, that her Provinces may suffer those Calamities her Policy hath endeavoured to continue in Spain, and that she may restore to this Monarchy all the unjust Usurpations she hath made upon it in the last Age; which I trust in GOD to effect, and that in order thereto I shall have the Assistance of the Spaniards with that Zeal and Readiness which are suitable to their Interest: But if, on the contrary, slighting my Paternal and Pious Advice, they shall continue obstinate, I shall be justified to GOD and the World both, since there is nothing omitted on my Part to make them truly sensible, and themselves will be the Cause of the general Destruction of their Country, and their own Ruin; for proportionable to the Mercy I now offer, will be the Wrath which they shall experience in my just Anger. And as I shall dispence Rewards, Honours and Favours, to the Fidelity of those that have followed me; so will I punish those who do not separate themselves from the contrary Party. *Given in Valentia the 22d of December*, 1706.

I the KING.

By Command of the King Our Lord,
Don Henrique Gunter.

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